

PathLights

*"Your word is a lamp to my feet
and a light to my path"
Psalm 119:104*

October 2, 2016

Jesus Is Coming: How?

by Frank Himmel

Jesus is coming! Last week we examined some reasons why. Jesus is not coming to complete work He left unfinished, to offer further atonement for sin, to invite people to be saved, or to establish His kingdom. He is coming to raise the dead (John 5:28-29), to judge the world (Acts 17:30-31), to receive His disciples to Himself (John 14:3), and to punish the wicked (2 Thessalonians 1:6-10).



Now, consider what the Bible says about *how* Jesus is coming.

Jesus is coming with the clouds.

"Behold, He is coming with the clouds, and every eye will

see Him, even those who pierced Him; and all the tribes of the earth will mourn over Him. So it is to be. Amen" (Revelation 1:7). Coming with the clouds is an Old Testament expression of divine activity. Psalm 104:3 depicts the clouds as God's chariot, and Isaiah 19:1 pictures Him riding a swift cloud coming in judgment against Egypt. At His trial, Jesus quoted a similar reference from Daniel 7:13 and applied it to Himself (Mark 14:62). When He did, the Council condemned Him of blasphemy for taking a divine prerogative to Himself.

Revelation 1:7 may refer to an interim judgment against Rome (the context of the book); regardless, Acts 1:11 uses the same language to describe His final coming. Remember, one of the reasons Jesus is coming is to judge the world.

Jesus is coming visibly. When Jesus ascended to heaven, the apostles "were gazing intently into the sky while He was going" (Acts 1:10). Two angels asked them, "Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking into the sky? This Jesus, who has been taken up from you into heaven, will come in just the same way as you have watched Him go into heaven" (Acts 1:11). Jesus likened it to lightening flashing from the east to the west (Matthew 24:27). No one will miss it!

Jesus is coming audibly. "For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet of God..." (1 Thessalonians 4:16a). A shout, an angelic command, a divine trumpet – that sounds loud to me! Those who envision some sort of secretive coming, in which God's people are whisked away without anyone else knowing, surely have it wrong.

Jesus is coming accompanied by angels. 2 Thessalonians 1:7 says "the Lord Jesus will be revealed from heaven with His mighty angels in flaming fire." Fire is another Old Testament picture of divine judgment (Isaiah 29:6; 66:15-16), and leading an army of angels conveys Jesus' absolute power to bring about such a judgment.

Next week we will study *where* the Lord is coming. Meanwhile, are you ready for the Lord's judgment?

Three Follow-up Questions

by Frank Himmel

One of our readers asked three questions in response to last week’s article about why Jesus is coming. I appreciate the questions; they tell me folks are reading and thinking. I will do my best to answer them, admitting that there is much about this I do not know. (You may need to reread last week’s article to get the context.)

Q. Why does Jesus need to hand the kingdom over to the Father? Paul’s answer is, “When all things are subjected to Him [Jesus], then the Son Himself also will be subjected to the One who subjected all things to Him, so that God may be all in all” (1 Corinthians 15:28). It will be Jesus’ final act of submission, a final way to glorify the Father. Now, the Father’s dominion is administered by Jesus. Then, God will be all in all, personally exercising complete dominion in all things.

Q. Does Jesus remain our high priest once His reign as king is handed over? I do not know of a definitive passage on this subject, but two considerations suggest the answer is no.

First, Jesus’ priesthood and kingship are simultaneous. He is a priest “according to the order of Melchizedek” (Psalm 110:4; Hebrews 7:5-6; etc.), who was both priest and king (Hebrews 7:1). Zechariah prophesied, “He will be a priest on His

throne, and the counsel of peace will be between the two offices” (Zechariah 6:13b). An end to Jesus’ kingship, therefore, would imply an end to His priestly service.

Second, Jesus’ priestly service relates to our weaknesses (Hebrews 4:14-16). He made atonement for our sins and presented that offering before the Father (Hebrews 9). He is always making intercession for us (Hebrews 7:25). When Jesus comes and this world with its evil ends, there will no longer be a need for such service.

Q. Why do some passages talk about Jesus reigning forever (Luke 1:33; Revelation 11:15) or being a priest forever (Psalm 110:4; Hebrews 7:24) if He is not? Expressions such as forever, always, and have no end are sometimes relative. For example, Ecclesiastes 1:4 presents the earth remaining forever in contrast to generations coming and going. 2 Peter 3:10 makes it clear, however, that the earth will one day be destroyed.



Jesus’ kingship is forever, in contrast to rising and falling nations and kings (Daniel 2). His priesthood is forever, in contrast to the ever-changing priesthood of the Old Testament (Hebrews 7). Neither of those facts precludes a change when the present world order ends. On the other hand, divine reign continues throughout eternity, and in some way Jesus shares in that (Revelation 22:3); the Bible often makes no clear distinction. Robert Harkrider wisely commented, “The Father and the Son act in such unity that mortal minds should not quibble about where each one is seated” (*Truth Commentaries: Revelation 253*). The great message of Revelation is that Christians in a sense share in that reign, too (22:5). ■

Service Leaders for the Week			
	Sunday Morning	Sunday Evening	Wednesday Evening
GREETER	Greg Winget	Chris Brooks	Howard Moore
SONG LEADER	Carlos Garcia	Bruce Williams	Albert Lee Harrison
OPENING PRAYER	Greg Winget	Brian Wilson	
LORD’S SUPPER			
BREAD	Mark Clifton	Mark Clifton	
CUP	Adam Gibson	Adam Gibson	
CONTRIBUTION PRAYER	David Gray		
SERMON/INVITATION	Frank Himmel	Frank Himmel	Steven Turner
CLOSING PRAYER	Albert Harrison Sr	Lee Davenport	J B Williams